

Message Text

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TO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 162747

FOLLOWING REPEAT ABIDJAN 6063 ACTION SECSTATE INFO
BANGUI MONROVIA NIAMEY PARIS PEKING PHNOM PENH
SAIGON SEOUL TAIPEI 25 JULY.

QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 6063

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR,CH, IC

SUBJECT: REPUBLIC OF CHINA'S RELATIONS WITH IVORY COAST

SUMMARY: IN VIEW OF RECENT DECISION OF GOVERNMENT OF NIGER TO
ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH PRC, AND THUS TERMINATE LONG-STANDING
RELATIONS WITH ROC, THIS IS AN ASSESSMENT OF STATUS OF ROC
RELATIONS WITH IVORY COAST, ONE OF FEW REMAINING AFRICAN COUNTRIES
WHICH CONTINUES DEIPLOMATIC TIES WITH TAIPEI. PROGNOSIS IS: NO
CHANGE LIKELY HERE WITHIN NEAR FUTURE.

1. SINCE NIGER ANNOUNCED ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS WITH PEKING
LAST WEEK, THERE HAS BEEN SOME SPECULATION HERE AS TO FUTURE OF
ROC RELATIONS WITH IVORY COAST. THIS COUNTRY IS NOW ONE OF ONLY
EIGHT AFRICAN COUNTRIES STILL HAVING RELATIONS WITH ROC; ONLY
OTHER WEST AFRICAN COUNTRIES ARE LIBERIA AND GAMBIA; ONLY OTHER
FRANCOPHONE IS CAR. THE SPECULATION EXTENDS AS WELL TO IMPLICATIONS
OF NIGER'S ACTION TOWARD CHINAS ON KOREAS, VIETNAMS AND CAMBODIAS.

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(NOTE THAT SEVERAL AMBASSADORS BASED HERE ARE ALSO ACCREDITED TO

NIAMEY).

2. SIGNS WHICH FAVOR CONTINUED IVORY COAST RELATIONS WITH ROC:

(A) PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY IS VERY RELUCTANT TO DESERT OLD FRIENDS. HE WAS LAST SIGNIFICANT AFRICAN LEADER TO BREAK WITH ISRAEL, AND THEN UNDER STRONG OAU PRESSURE. THERE IS NO SUCH PRESSURE HERE TO BREAK WITH ROC. HE IS PLEASED WITH AID HE IS NOW RECEIVING FROM ROC, PARTICULARLY IN AGRICULTURE. HE HAS MANY TIMES DECLARED HIMSELF OPPOSED TO COMMUNISM AND TO INVITING IT INTO IVORY COAST VIA POWERFUL COMMUNIST COUNTRY EMBASSIES.

(B) ROC AMBASSADOR T. K. BERNARD JOEI IS ABOUT TO BECOME VICE-DEAN OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS IN ABIDJAN (WITH DEPARTURE OF TUNISIAN AMBASSADOR). JOEI HAS BEEN HERE NEARLY SIX YEARS. WHILE ROC HAS RELATIONS WITH VERY FEW OTHER GOVERNMENTS REPRESENTED HERE, JOEI IS PERSONALLY SO HIGHLY REGARDED AS ASTUTE DIPLOMAT THAT HE IS CALLED ON AND INVITED TO SOCIAL GATHERINGS BY MOST OF DIPCORPS. EVEN FRENCH AMBASSADOR, THE DEAN, INVITED HIM THIS YEAR (FOR FIRST TIME) TO JULY 14 RECEPTION. IN RECENT CONVERSATION JOEI HAD WITH FOREIGN MINISTER ARSENE USHER ASSUAN, LATTER REMARKED THAT "WHEN WE RENEGOTIATE CONVENTION WITH FRANCE, YOU MAY EVEN BECOME DEAN OF DIPCORPS*"

(C) IN JOEI'S VIEW, IVORIANS LOOK ON NIGER'S RECENT SHIFT AS SOMETHING A NEW GOVERNMENT, SEEKING SUBSTANTIAL AID AND SUBJECT TO PRESSURES FROM FELLOW MILITARY GOVERNMENTS IN NEIGHBORING STATES (PARTICULARLY NIGERIA) DID FAIRLY EASILY, WHEREAS IVORIANS HAVE NO REASON TO CHANGE.

3. ONE SIGN WHICH INCREASES POSSIBILITY OF IVORY COAST SHIFT:

(A) GOIC HAS RECENTLY ANNOUNCED ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH POLAND AND THERE ARE STRONG INDICATIONS OF SUBSEQUENT ACTION TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH RUMANIA. WHILE THESE ARE SMALLER COMMUNIST NATIONS, THERE IS SOME FEELING THESE ACTIONS ARE PRELIMINARY TO RESUMPTION OF RELATIONS (BROKEN IN 1969) WITH USSR. PRC COULD THEORETICALLY FOLLOW.

4. CONCLUSION ON ROC STATUS: THE CONTINUED ABSOLUTE ROLE OF
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PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY IN ALL MAJOR POLICY DECISIONS, TOGETHER WITH CLEAR INDICATIONS OF HIS POSITIVE VIEWS ON ROC AND NEGATIVE ONES ON PRC, MAKE CHANGE HIGHLY UNLIKELY AS LONG AS HE REMAINS IN OFFICE.

5. REPUBLIC OF KOREA AND REPUBLIC OF VIET NAM CONTINUE TO CONSIDER THEIR POSITIONS SOLID IN IVORY COAST. KOREAN AMBASSADOR, WHILE WORRIED BY RECENT EVENTS IN NIAMEY, IS SPENDING A LOT OF TIME WITH NEW GON (EIGHT VISITS SINCE THE APRIL COUP) AND DOES NOT SEE SAME

THINGS HAPPENING TO GON POLICY TOWARD KOREA. VIETNAMESE AMBASSADOR
GOING TO NAIMEY NEXT WEEK TO PRESENT HIS CREDENTIALS TO NEW
GOVERNMENT.

6. AS PREVIOUS REPORTED, HOWEVER, THERE IS LITTLE SYMPATHY HERE
FOR LON NOL GOVERNMENT IN CAMBODIA AND, TOGETHER WITH
UNCERTAINTIES OVER "WHO'S ON FIRST" THERE, WE HAVE GROWING FEELING
THAT GOIC MIGHT PULL BACK ITS SUPPORT FROM RKG AT TIME OF NEXT
UNGA DEBATE.
SMITH UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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